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ABNORMAL TYPES OF SPEECH IN QUILEUTE¹

By LEO J. FRACHTENBERG

THE devices employed in a number of languages, primitive and otherwise, for the purpose of implying something in regard to the status, sex, age, or other characteristics of the speaker, person addressed, or person spoken of, are well known to all students of linguistics. These devices belong properly in the domain of abnormal types of speech, and quite a number of them have been brought together in an interesting paper written recently by Dr. Sapir and entitled "Abnormal Types of Speech in Nootka²". Consequently, I am not going to expose myself to the reproach of repetition by quoting the examples cited by Dr. Sapir, but will confine myself to referring all those interested in this subject to the highly instructive and illuminating article mentioned above.

This paper deals only with such abnormal types of speech as have been observed by me in the Quileute language during extensive studies conducted for the Bureau of American Ethnology in the summer of 1915 and again in the summer and fall of 1916. My informants were Hallie George, an intelligent young half-blood Quileute, whose father was a white man, and Arthur Howeattle, a full-blood Indian and the eldest son of the last chief of the Quileute tribe. In justice to Howeattle be it said that he was by far the better of the two informants and that he was still able to recollect and explain the exact function of practically each abnormal type of speech. I do not claim, however, to have

succeeded in collecting every device, owing to the rapid process of disintegration which the Quileute language is undergoing and to its gradual replacement by the English tongue.

A few words concerning the position and distribution of the Quileute language and Indians may not be out of place here. These Indians belong to the Chimakuan family which embraces, in addition to this tribe, also the totally extinct Chimacum division. The differences between the two dialects are very slight, being confined to a certain amount of lexicographic and to some phonetic divergences. There are good reasons to believe that Chimakuan, Wakashan, and Salishan may be proved to be genetically related, representing three linguistic stocks that ultimately go back to a single source. Assuming, for the time being, this to be the case, I would suggest the term *Mosan* for this group of languages, in view of the fact that the numeral for FOUR (*mōs* or *bōs*) is commonly found in the dialects of each of these three groups. Ethnologically little is known of the Chimacum tribe, whose territory lay in the northeastern portion of Jefferson County in the State of Washington. The Quileute Indians lived formerly in the western part of Clallam County, but occupy today a small strip of land around the mouth of the river of the same name. A smaller sub-division, called the Hoh Indians, live some twenty miles farther south. The mythology and culture of these Indians are closely related to the mythologies and cultures of the adjoining tribes, especially those of the Quinault to the south and the Nootka to the north. Particularly close points of contact

1. Published with permission of the Smithsonian Institution.

2. Memoir 62, No. 5, Anthropological Series, Ottawa Government Printing Bureau, 1915.

have been observed between the Quileute and Makah tribes. The members of these two are the only Indians in the United States proper known to have actually engaged in whale-hunting. And, while the Makahs gave up this occupation with the advent of the white man, the Quileutes still pursued it up to about 20 years ago.

One of the forms of abnormal types of speech first observed in Quileute pertains to certain words used by children. These words are distinguished from similar terms used by grown-up people either by means of a certain suffix, or also by the exhibition of internal changes which, to borrow Sapir's terminology, are based upon the principle of "consonantal or vocalic play". A few words have been found which are totally distinct from the stems used by individuals other than children.

In a majority of cases the children add the suffix *-ck!* to each word used by them. This suffix has no other grammatical function. Thus a child says ¹,

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| <i>ɔ'lo'ck!</i> | FATHER | for <i>ɔ'lo'</i> |
| <i>tci'ɛ'la'ck!</i> | UNCLE | for <i>tci'ɛ'la'</i> |
| <i>aba'ck!</i> | GRANDPARENT | for <i>abā'</i> |

In addressing its mother, a child uses the term *ka'a'dada* instead of *ka'a*. In this case the reduplicated form of the suffix *-da* merely represents the babbling of a young child and was referred to by my informant as "baby talk."

Some "baby talk" words are based upon changes involving "consonantal and vocalic play." Thus a child calls the DEER *hāwā'yicka'* instead of *hawa'yicka'*; a CAT is referred to as *pu'dā* instead of *pw'c*; while a COW in "baby talk" is *mā'* instead of *bō'sbōs*. In this connec-

tion it is worth while noting that the nasal *m* is foreign to Quileute phonetics, being always replaced by a labial *b*. The inferences that may be drawn from this will be discussed later on.

Among the words used by children only and totally distinct from similar terms employed by grown-up persons the following may be mentioned.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| <i>bā'ba'</i> ² | FOOD | for <i>ā'lita'</i> |
| <i>bō'</i> ¹ | WATER | for <i>q!wā'ya'</i> |
| <i>ā'a'</i> | CROW | for <i>kā'ayo'</i> |
| <i>dī'di'</i> | CLOTHES | for <i>yī'sdak'</i> |
| <i>lā'la'</i> | TOY | |

Of a far greater importance, particularly from a comparative point of view, are those abnormal types of speech which are used whenever it is desired to single out some physical trait of the speaker, of the person addressed, or of the person spoken of. For that purpose the native Quileute uses partly certain prefixes, and partly internal changes involving "consonantal play". It will be well to state at the outset that these forms of speech apply only to persons physically abnormal and to mythological beings or animals. Sufficient data from other languages are still lacking to justify even the attempt at explaining or accounting for the psychological reasons underlying this linguistic phenomenon. Attention, however, may be called to the explanation given by one of my informants. According to his testimony, this phenomenon goes back to an ancient custom whereby each individual discriminated his own speech by means of an affix. The individual in question usually had some physical deformity. Now, while this explanation may not be convincing, it is original and, in the absence of weightier reasons, must be taken at its face value.

Most affixes and forms representing an abnor-

1. The phonetic transcription of sounds agrees in the main with the recommendations made by the Committee of the American Anthropological Society.

2. These two terms may be onomatopoeic in origin and character.

mal type of speech are used either by the speaker himself or by another person speaking of the individual whom such a speech-form intends to single out. In few cases only is the abnormal form used in direct address, the reason for this being too apparent to require any comment. In some instances the speaker himself refrains from using the appropriate affix, because such a use would constitute an admission of some deformity.

When speaking of SNAIL or of a cross-eyed and one-eyed person the prefix *L-* is placed before each word; such individuals, when speaking themselves, also change all sibilants (*s* and *c* sounds) to *ʃ* sounds. In this manner *ʃ* is substituted for *s* or *c*; *L* for *ts* and *tc*; and *L!* for *ts!* or *tc!*. These forms are never used in direct address. The following examples may be given for the use of such forms of speech with SNAIL or a cross-eyed person as the speakers or persons spoken of.

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <i>L-ʃi'yali</i> | I SEE IT | for <i>si'yali</i> |
| <i>L-ʃi'quli</i> | I PULL IT | for <i>ci'quli</i> |
| <i>L-iʃe'ʃli</i> | INTEND TO DO IT | for <i>its'e'ʃli</i> |
| <i>L-a'ʃaʃla'a</i> | WHERE IS IT? | for <i>a'ʃaʃta'a</i> |
| <i>L-L!i'qā'ti</i> | WORLD | for <i>ts!i'qā'ti</i> |

When addressing a funny person, the prefix *tck-* is used; when speaking to a small-sized man, a sibilant (*s-*) is placed before each word; in talking of a hunchback, the affix *ts!* is employed; while the prefix *tcx-* refers to a lame person. Two other prefixes of this type were mentioned by Arthur Howeattle (*tc-*, *tcq-*) who could not, however, state definitely what kind of individuals they singled out.

Turning now to types of speech peculiar to mythological beings and animals, we find first of all the prefix *sx-* characterizing each word used by Q!wā'ti, the culture-hero of Quileute mythology (Students of Nootka linguistics will recognize in this being the Kwa'tiyāt' of Nootka

and Kwe'ti of Makah mythologies.) Thus Q!wā'ti is supposed to say,

| | | |
|--------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| <i>sx-qā'qal</i> | TAKE IT! | for <i>qā'qal</i> |
| <i>sx-hā'kutax</i> | COME HERE! | for <i>hā'kutax</i> , etc. |

In like manner RAVEN prefixes to each word a *c-*, as *c-ki'taxatli* I AM GOING, etc. His wife uses the prefix *ts-* and changes *d* and *l* to *n* and *b* to *m*. Here again I call attention to the fact that these abnormal forms are the only instances in Quileute where the nasals *m*, *n*, occur. These two nasals are foreign to this language, being always represented by *b* and *d* respectively. Examples illustrating abnormalities in the speech of Raven's wife may be given as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| <i>ts-tāsk</i> | GO OUT | for <i>tāsk</i> |
| <i>ts-L!ōxwa'nās</i> | OLD MAN | for <i>L!ōxwa'dās</i> |
| <i>ts-hē tkuni</i> | I AM SICK | for <i>hē'tkuli</i> |
| <i>ts-mō'yūkwa'ts!ō</i> | SOMETHING | for <i>bō'yūkwa'ts!ō</i> |

Furthermore, to all words used by DEER or employed when speaking of DEER there is added the prefix *Lk-*, and in such words all sibilants are changed to laterals. Thus *ʃ* is changed to *s* or *c*; *L* is substituted for *ts* or *tc*; and *L!* replaces both *ts!* and *tc!*. The examples follow.

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| <i>Lk-hawā'yilka'</i> | DEER | for <i>hawā'yicka'</i> |
| <i>Lk-da'ʃkiya</i> | GIANTESS | for <i>da'skiya</i> |
| <i>Lk-Loxō'l</i> | SHOOT IT! | for <i>tsōxō'l</i> |
| <i>Lk-Libō'd</i> | HALIBUTHOOK | for <i>tcibō'd</i> |
| <i>Lk-L!iqā'l</i> | KILL HIM! | for <i>tc!iqā'l</i> |

Lastly, there are two devices in Quileute which imply a distinction in regard to the sex of the person addressed; one consisting of a prefix, and the other, of syntactic particles placed at the very end of the sentence. These two devices may be the result of the presence, in this language, of sex gender. Thus whenever a man speaks to a woman directly or whenever one woman speaks of another woman who is

absent, each word must be preceded by the prefix *tcx-*. It is rather interesting to note that, in this case, the man is not afraid of giving offense to the addressed person by calling attention to her "abnormality", from which it will be seen that the Quileute Indians were not afraid of their women. In the same manner the particles *tca* and *da* are used in addressing a man and a woman respectively; the first being usually translated by my informant by means of the English term *SIR*, and the latter being rendered by *MADAM* or *LADY*.

The most important problem suggesting itself in connection with the abnormal types of speech in Quileute, to which I wish here to call attention briefly, is their probable relation to a similar phenomenon observed by Dr. Sapir in the Nootka language. This problem becomes more interesting when it is considered that there exist close cultural and linguistic affiliations between these two groups. Very close correspondences have been observed in this respect between these two languages. Thus both have distinct devices indicating the speech of children, small persons, cross-eyed and one-eyed people, hunchbacks, and lame persons. Turning to mythological beings and animals, we find that both single out the speech of the Culture-Hero, of Raven, and of Deer. Furthermore, some of this distinctiveness in speech is accomplished in both tongues by means of certain consonantic changes; a particularly close resemblance being furnished by the change of *s* and *c* sounds into *ʃ* sounds, which is found in both languages to apply to the speech of Deer. These correspondences are certainly close. On the other hand, divergences have been observed which are just as striking. Aside from the fact that the Nootka speech-peculiarities attributed to large persons, left-handed persons, circum-sized people, greedy persons, cowards, and to small birds, to bear, and to elk, are missing in Quileute, the Quileute grammatical and pho-

netic devices are different from those employed in the Nootka language. Suffixation is replaced in Quileute by prefixation, where the phonetic composition of the elements is also different and shows a greater variety of sounds.

The question which confronts us now is this; Are these abnormal types of speech, as observed in Quileute and Nootka, the result of an independent origin and development, or are they due to contact? A categorical answer to this question at the present writing is impossible. However, when we consider that the Quileute language, in using abnormal types of speech, resorts to the borrowing of foreign phonetic elements, we ought to feel justified in the assumption that this phenomenon goes back to a time when these two languages were one, but that in addition it was developed independently and modified through a later close contact between these two tribes. It is safer to hold to this assumption until such time as comparative data shall be made available from the Salish tribes adjoining the Quileute, which may furnish the sole and ultimate proof for the exact origin and distribution of this interesting linguistic peculiarity.

TABULAR PRESENTATION OF ABNORMAL TYPES OF SPEECH USED IN QUILUTE

| TYPE OF PERSON | LINGUISTIC PECULIARITY |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Child | Add <i>-ck!</i> |
| Cross-eyed or one-eyed person; Snail | Prefix <i>L-</i> ; change <i>s</i> and <i>c</i> sounds to <i>ʃ</i> sounds |
| Funny person | Prefix <i>tck-</i> |
| Small person | Prefix <i>s-</i> |
| Hunchback | Prefix <i>ts!</i> |
| Lame person | Prefix <i>tcx-</i> |
| ? | Prefixes <i>tc-</i> , <i>tcq-</i> |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|---|
| Male to female | Prefix <i>tcx-</i> ; or add particle <i>da</i> at end of sentence | Raven | Prefix <i>c-</i> |
| Female to male or male to male | Add particle <i>tca</i> at end of sentence | Raven's wife | Prefix <i>ts-</i> ; change <i>d, l</i> to <i>n</i> and <i>b</i> to <i>m</i> |
| Culture hero <i>Q!wä'ti</i> | Prefix <i>sx-</i> | Deer | Prefix <i>Lk-</i> ; change <i>s</i> and <i>c</i> sounds to <i>ʔ</i> sounds |